

Morgantown Tree Board (MTB)

Minutes, meeting of February 23, 2015

Present: MTB members Dan Brown, Katherine Payne, Dave Davis, Secretary Jon Weems, and Chair Dave Barnett, and City Manager Jeff Mikorski, City employee Marchetta Maupin, Council liaison Nancy Ganz, and BOPARC Director Melissa Burch.

Chair D. Barnett called the meeting to order at 4:33 PM in City Council chambers and noted that a quorum was present.

D. Brown moved, and K. Payne seconded, that minutes of the 12/15/14 meeting be approved as re-amended. The motion carried unanimously.

J. Weems moved, and D. Brown seconded, that the minutes of the 1/26/15 meeting be approved as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Unfinished Business

1. Deckers Creek Trees at Marilla Park/ WV Radio Corporation (WVRC). The City has still not heard a response from WVRC.

2. Bartlett Tree Experts/City Trees Update. Ben from Bartlett has been to Morgantown and checked out the contracted work with D. Barnett and M. Maupin. Bartlett is expected to perform the contracted work within two weeks or so, weather permitting. It was noted that 1st ward residents are interested in seeing replacement trees planted at Jack Roberts Park. N. Ganz suggested contacting Nicole Pannacione before pruning trees in her neighborhood. K. Payne said three hawthorns at the end of the Pleasant St. bridge need pruning. Trees downtown, in Evansdale, and in South Park were discussed. It was noted that hornbeams on Simpson St., formerly an MTB Arbor Day planting, need pruning and possible growth regulator application. M. Maupin stated, and City Manager Mikorski concurred, that \$13,878 remained in the City's urban forestry budget as of January 31.

3. Tree Planting and Grates. D. Barnett said he had received an email from Bob Hannah suggesting MTB could begin putting together a Demonstration City Grant proposal. This is a 50-50 matching grant. D. Barnett indicated the emailed info had an old date, so he will check to see that the info is current. It was noted that some buildings on Pleasant St. may be razed, so planting might need to be delayed, but there are four tree pits that could use trees and grates. There was some discussion of past problems with grates and means of avoiding those problems in the future. It was noted that Pleasant St. trees have had a tough time because of heavy truck traffic. Columnar trees were thus suggested. D. Davis expressed a wish for summer-flowering trees. City Manager Mikorski said MTB should figure the costs of trees and related materials, then the City could figure its 50-50 match.

4. Tree Inventory Database. D. Barnett said he had provided some info about a Google cloud-based system that could work to City employee Damien Davis for review.

5. Tree City USA Application update. City Manager Mikorski announced the application has been completed and submitted. For 2014, between the City and the University, the totals were 235 trees planted, 950 pruned, and 641 removed. The total expenditure for tree work was \$727,440, or \$26.08 per capita, easily exceeding Tree City USA criteria.

New Business

1. Community Forestry Ordinance (CFO) Review. City Manager Mikorski noted that the CFO lacks the section about officers common to other City boards and committees, possibly because MTB was formerly considered a subcommittee of the Urban Landscape Commission (ULC). M. Maupin noted that MTB liaison with ULC will always be needed. There was discussion of how to deal with chronic absences from MTB meetings. It was noted that three MTB members have a hard time attending many MTB meetings. Possible meeting date and time changes were discussed, but no actions were taken.

2. Hazard Trees. M. Maupin circulated a list of recent tree removals. D. Barnett raised the issue of how to replace removed trees with new ones less likely to become problematic. Cost-sharing, possibly with neighborhood associations, was an idea that N. Ganz liked in principle. It was pointed out that most neighborhood associations would be unlikely to come up with much money, though. City Manager Mikorski raised the issue of liability and thought this should be explored first.

3. 2015/2016 MTB Budget. City Manager Mikorski cautioned that the budget for the next fiscal year will show zero for MTB. He said MTB members should not be too alarmed, though, as one-time revenues not in the budget should be coming in, and some funding for MTB is expected to come from these one-time revenues. The budget will include funding for tree pits, bump-outs, and grates to replace tree pit curbs. It was noted that some established trees may need to be replanted if grate installation leads to major root damage.

4. Urban Forester appointment to ULC. M. Maupin noted that Katy Trupo, a former urban forestry student of MTB member Greg Dahle's, has been appointed to the ULC. It is hoped that K. Trupo might be a liaison between MTB and the ULC.

Open Discussion:

K. Payne said she had spoken recently with MTB member Jack Cumming, and J. Cumming has not had recent contact with Milan Roh about a possible tree planting. There was discussion of the planned Patteson Drive crossing near Baldwin St. D. Barnett highly recommended reading *The Man Who Planted Trees* by Jim Robbins.

Next meeting slated for Monday, March 23, 2015 at 4:30 in City Council chambers.

Motion to adjourn made at 6:07 PM by J. Weems, seconded by K. Payne. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted, _____ Jon Weems, Secretary